

The Bel Aire Breeze

Vol. 8, No. 4

MAY 2013

Complimentary copy

Concern over break-ins persist in Bel Aire, Kechi

By Matt Heilman

For at least the eighth time since the start of the year, a burglary was reported in Bel Aire's neighbor to the west in early April.

And the situation in Bel Aire isn't much better than it is in Kechi.

In Bel Aire, eight burglaries and 11 larcenies were reported in the city from the beginning of December

through Feb. 11, Police Chief John Daily said. The problem has persisted as is evident with the city's police reports from March 22 to April 23.

Jewelry was reported stolen in a March 22 burglary in the 5100 of East 48th North. Jewelry and loose change were reported stolen in a March 26 burglary in the 4800 block of North Oliver. On March 27, a resident in the nearby 4200 block of

North Oliver reported an unknown suspect had attempted to enter her residence. A side garage door was forced open and the door frame was broken, but no property was reported stolen.

On April 21, a resident reported hearing someone trying to open a sliding glass door to her basement in the 4300 block of North Rushwood. The resident reported seeing a man run from

her backyard into a wooded area. The resident wasn't able to identify the man, but said he was wearing a white shirt, shorts and a white hat.

Bel Aire police were unable to find any signs of anyone in the area.

Along with several suspicious character and vehicle calls, Bel Aire police have responded to several larcenies in the last couple of months, including four reported from

April 21 through 23.

In Kechi, a suspect and vehicle description were provided in the latest reported burglary, but no arrests have been in connection to the case. Sometime before 9:15 a.m. April 3, a resident in Kechi observed a suspect leaving a residence that had been broken into in the 200 block of North Sioux. The suspect appeared to have broken into the residence through

the back door and took more than \$1,000 in jewelry, Kechi police said.

The suspect was described as a man in his mid-30s to mid-40s, about six feet tall and 200 pounds, wearing dark slacks and white gloves. The man was driving a brown late model Ford van with a black, rubber device called a car bra fitted over the front

See CRIME, Page 4

Departing leaders reflect on service

By Matt Heilman

With a changing of the guard at Bel Aire City Hall, there's a sense of stability in the city, which at times has struggled to stay afloat. The last few years have presented steep challenges in Bel Aire, where a budget crisis has forced deep cuts, tax increases and serious discussion about whether the community would be able to maintain its charter to keep its status as a city.

Returning, departing and new city leaders have expressed that the city is on the right track with increased development and a grasp on handling its debt. Bel Aire isn't prospering, but enough progress has been made for a departing mayor and council member to feel comfortable leaving the governing body.

In January, Mayor Harold Smith announced he didn't plan to seek a fourth two-year mayoral term. He said it was "time for someone else to carry the load."

That "someone else" is David Austin, who has transitioned from his seat on the city council to replace Smith as mayor. As mayor, Austin said he wanted to be a cheerleader for a community that is on the brink of serious commercial and residential growth.

When he filed to run for mayor in January, Austin said his No. 1 goal was to protect Bel Aire's taxpayers.

Smith, retired from a career in the financial industry, said he served his last three two-year terms as mayor to help the city start to alleviate



ABOVE: Newly elected city leaders (from left) council member Guy MacDonald, council member Peggy O'Donnell, Mayor David Austin, council member Ramona Becker and council member Betty Martine take an oath of office before taking their first official action as a group at the April 16 city council meeting. LEFT: Departing Mayor Harold Smith receives a token of appreciation from City Manager Ty Lasher.

Photos by Matt Heilman

See LEADERS, Page 4

Bel Aire has best turnout

By Matt Heilman

In recent local elections, low turnouts have become the rule rather than the exception. On April 2, most area cities had less than 10 percent of registered voters bother to do so.

By comparison to most area cities, voter turnout wasn't bad in Bel Aire where 458 votes were cast to determine the city's mayor and what four from a pool of eight candidates would fill at-large seats on the city council.

Incumbent Peggy O'Donnell retained her seat with 331 votes. Guy MacDonald received 287 votes, followed by Ramona Becker with 275 and Betty Martine with 270.

O'Donnell, MacDonald and Becker

won full, four-year terms on the council. As the fourth-place vote getter, Martine will serve the unexpired term of departed council member Moe Terrebonne for the next two years.

Shelly Smith received the fifth highest number of votes for Bel Aire City Council with 228, followed by Carolyn Smith with 196, Andrew Uhlschmidt with 151, Jeanette Clement with 120 and 20 votes for a write-in candidate.

Former council member David Austin won the mayoral election unopposed to replace departing Mayor Harold Smith. As was expected, Austin received overwhelming support to step in as mayor over preference for a write-in candidate.

At its April 9 meeting, the Park City council discussed the city and county-

wide turnout for the April 2 election that determined council, mayoral and school board seats. In the election in Park City, one council spot in each of the city's four wards and the mayoral seat were determined. In the Ward 2 council race where newcomer George Glover edged incumbent Cecil Goldsmith, 78-70, the turnout accounted for more than half of the 287 total votes cast in the city. Countywide, the April 8 voting canvas revealed that only about 6.2 percent of eligible voters in Sedgwick County bothered to do so on April 2. According to the Sedgwick County Election Office, there are 274,302 registered voters in Sedgwick County.

On April 9, departing Park City Council

See ELECTION, Page 4



Matt Heilman

Among the progress on the residential development front in Bel Aire is the construction of new courtyard homes in the Elk Creek Addition. A few of the homes were introduced April 11.

Bel Aire continues progress on housing

Courtyards work underway

By Matt Heilman

The Bel Aire City Council on April 2 took measures to bring new residents to the city.

To support continued construction, the council first approved an engineering service agreement with Mid Kansas Engineering Consultants for infrastructure engineering for Phase I of the Courtyards at Elk Creek at a cost not to exceed \$67,300. The Courtyards at Elk Creek includes the construction of patio-type homes in the addition, dubbed courtyard homes because each home has its own private courtyard.

Plans call for the construction of 101 single-family lots to be developed in three phases, near 45th North and Rock Road. The council approved the final plat for the Courtyards at Elk Creek in December.

On April 16, the new council approved infrastructure work for Phases 1, 2 and 3 of the Courtyards at Elk Creek. The work on the lots, which will be paid for by occupants in the homes on each lot, include sanitary sewer, water and paving improvements.

A grand opening for the public to view the newly constructed homes was held on April 11.

The previous council also approved the real estate agreement for purchase of property at the northeast corner of 53rd North and Rock Road following a 30-minute executive session to discuss matters pertaining to attorney-client privilege.

The council followed its business involving the Courtyards at Elk Creek with the approval of contracts for the installation of water and sewer mains in the Rock Spring Addition, located near 53rd North and Rock Road. Plans for Rock Spring call for a mixture of single-family homes and duplexes.

The installation of the water and sewer mains was approved at a total cost not to exceed \$114,833.95. The council also approved a resolution authorizing the sale of about \$460,000 in general obligation temporary notes for infrastructure work in Rock Spring.

To help spur further progress on the residential front, the council approved a marketing proposal from Wichita State University's

See HOUSING, Page 4



Mayor's corner

By David Austin

Two years ago, I was infamously quoted in this very paper as saying we all know “it’s going to be a sucky year.” I am happy to report that is not a quote I plan on making again, ever. In fact, this year is full of promise for our city.

Let me start off by telling you how honored I am to have been selected to lead our city for the next two years.

Also please allow me to introduce myself. I was born in Ohio to young parents who were still completing graduate school — Dad a pastor in the United Church of Christ and Mom a special -education elementary teacher. There wasn’t a lot of money in the house, but it was filled with love and laughter, and I watched my parents open up their hearts and homes to people in need over and over. They were (Mom passed away in 1994) and are two of the most caring people I have ever met and always served and put others’ needs first. My dad has since remarried a wonderful, caring and giving lady. Notice a pattern?

My hope is that I can carry what I was taught into the role of mayor of Bel Aire.

We have a brand new city council. Ken Lee has served just one year and we are lucky to have Peggy O’Donnell re-elected.

I am pleased to welcome three new members whom I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with in different capacities over the last several years — Ramona Becker, Guy MacDonald and Betty Martine. The new council is a varied and well-balanced group. There are sensitive issues and tough choices ahead, but as my parents taught me, city first, and I challenge each and every council member to put city first when making any decision.

It seems like a long time ago that we were in for a sucky year. There are great things ahead of Bel Aire, and I am honored to be a part of them.

I want to close by saying a big thank you to outgoing Mayor Harold Smith, who gave countless hours to lead us bravely through the bleak times. We now see some real growth and progress because of the land the city acquired a decade ago. It is going to be awesome.

Look around at the new housing developments and watch the Sunflower Commerce Park grow like a weed.

Are we out of the woods yet? Not quite. But, the future is bright and I am excited to be a part of it.

Please feel free to contact me at City Hall at any time if you have questions or concerns or even a suggestion. I can’t promise I’ll get back to you right away, but I will promise you that you will be heard.

Hard Charge a humbling experience

I learned the hard way, but now I know. You have to think outside the box when training for the Hard Charge.

In preparing for the April 20 event, I logged well over 100 miles and mixed in three or four weekly weight-lifting sessions. As it turns out, I wasn’t ready for the four-mile obstacle course that made its way to the Kansas Pavilions.

The Hard Charge, which claims to challenge its participants mentally and physically, lived up to the hype. The treks through cold water, climbing, crawling and running were accompanied by cries for mercy on the morning of April 20 as temperatures hovered in the mid-40s.

The event, which features 27 obstacles, would have been easier had it been hot outside. I could have made it through the water without my body going into shock and improved my time by several minutes.

I could have improved that time even more had I focused more on rope-climbing, tire flipping, bear crawling, tree climbing and swimming laps in near freezing water and less on treadmill runs and dumb-bell exercises.

On one hand, I’m proud that I was able to complete the Hard Charge without throwing

Heil on life

By Matt Heilman



in the towel before the finish line.

On the other hand, I’m kicking myself for not being prepared. I sprinted across the finish line, but I looked pathetic along the way.

When I was done, people were concerned that I was catching hypothermia and urged me to sit by a heat lamp in one of the tents where people changed into their dry clothes. I don’t know why I seemed to have more trouble than other participants.

My brother-in-law, who handily finished the course more than 10 minutes faster than I did, told me it was an accomplishment just to finish the thing. He said his back hurt after he was done, but his teeth didn’t chatter like mine and he didn’t need to sit by a heat lamp to regain his senses.

Even crazier was a photo I saw on Facebook of United Methodist Church of Park City Pastor Rob Schmutz and a group of men from his congregation who competed



Mark Weaver

The Hard Charge race was easy — until he reached the first obstacle.

in the Hard Charge. The group posed for two pictures, one before the start of their race and a second after their heat was finished.

In the “after shot,” Schmutz and company were muddy and wet, but had the same happy-go-lucky smiles on their faces as they did before taking the challenge. They weren’t wrapped in towels or blankets, and one of the men was barefoot.

Kudos to the Park City church group. The Hard Charge returns to the Kansas

Pavilions on April 19, 2014.

Now that I know what to expect, I’ll be more prepared. I plan on significantly improving the time I posted in my first go at the event, but really, my goal is to be like Schmutz and the men from his church and have enough toughness to smile for the camera after it’s over without being swaddled in a towel in front of a heater.

Matt Heilman is a reporter for The Park City Post. Reach him at 755-0821 or matt@arkvalleynews.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

City is on the right track

This report is a review of the financial concerns of the city over the last six years. I believe it is important to document our efforts, our conclusions and our results.

From the beginning we saw that there were large land payments that had to be paid but there was no plan for where the money would come from. I am very pleased that this council, this city manager and this mayor were able to avoid a default on these payments. It was not easy!

We were able to do this with some hard decisions and some difficult actions. This included: raising taxes, reducing employees, reducing other expenses, using funds from other reserve accounts, putting off street repairs, getting help from the county on paving 53rd, refinancing the debt, selling land and learning how to market the land.

Yes, we avoided a default but the original problem is still with us. For many years to come, the city budget will continue to be dominated by the high cost of being in the land business. The interest on the land debt is now \$1,250,000 each year. (That’s \$100,000 every month.)

The solution is simple, in theory if not in practice. These interest payments will go away as soon as the city pays off the land loan. If this takes, say, 20 years, the principal payments will need to average \$950,000 each year for the next 20 years. This amount is in addition to the interest payments. (A principal payment of \$950,000 would reduce the next year’s interest payment by \$60,000.)

It’s easy to see why our biggest challenge and our greatest effort was to find a solution to this problem. We will be judged by how well we did this. This is also how future mayors and council members will be judged. They may not like inheriting this problem, but neither did we! My only advice going forward is to listen to the city manager and finance director. They have a good understanding of our financial needs. There is one important thing

we learned from this. A city has no business being in the land business. That should be left to people who know what they are doing and how to do it and who invests their own money and puts their own money at risk.

The big question remains unanswered. Can the city get out of the land business? The answer is “yes.” Actually, the city has no choice! We have these legal debt payments that must be paid each year. It may take 40 years to finally pay off all of the land debt, but it can be done. I just gave you some options on how to do this.

The good news is that this will become easier each year as the debt is paid down and the interest payments are thereby reduced. Also, we have some good momentum started on selling land and the awareness of Bel Aire, and what we have to offer, continues to grow. Also, it is very encouraging to see the recent increase in new construction in the city.

When this is finally over, the city can be proud that we honored our commitments and worked our way through this unfortunate situation.

Next, I want to thank the council members, and also the planning commission, for their service to the city. It is very important and very fortunate to have citizens who will accept the responsibilities of these positions.

My final comment will be: Goodbye good friends and good luck!

— Harold Smith, former Bel Aire mayor

In defense of the Senior Club

This is in response to letter to the questions that Gary O’Neal asked in a letter to the editor in the March Breeze.

Question 1: Yes, Carolyn has the articles of incorporation of Bel Aire Senior Club Inc. at her home, along with 25 years of photograph albums, meeting minutes and various and sundry other senior possessions. Should we bring them to City Hall for storage?

Question 2: Why did Bel Aire spend \$6,522.21 for

kitchen facilities at the rec center? Neither Carolyn or any other Senior Club member requested these building improvements. This facility is rented out for birthday parties, family reunions and such and is advertised to the public for their use. The city will be receiving revenue from this facility long after our 50 members are “pushing up daisies.” I can’t believe Mr. O’Neal complained about the city spending this amount to expand the use of the rec center when he led the city into a \$19 million debt on land when he was our mayor.

Question 3: Payment of the tri-city senior director. In lieu of being members of the tri-city group, we receive many benefits, including number of trips (some twice a day), foot care, exercise classes, tax service, line dancing, Saturday night dances, and the “Meals on Wheels” for Bel Aire originates in Park City. (Mileage from my house to Park City is 4.8 miles; from my house to City Hall is 2.5 miles).

Question 4: By-laws. Since we are an incorporated organization, we are not required to provide said by-laws to you or anyone.

Question 5: Membership dues. Yes, we pay dues. Currently, we pay \$5 yearly. Fifty members don’t seem to mind. This is a means to having a head count to include in our membership book and to provide lists for our calling committee to notify members of coming events.

Question 6: Garage sale funds. Yes, we have a garage sale every summer. The funds we receive are deposited in our bank account by our treasurer. What we spend it on are kitchen supplies, paper goods, memorial gifts for deceased members, a few programs, and in 2012, our Christmas dinner. Any funding we receive from the city is reimbursement after a bill is presented.

Question 7: Department of Aging events. We receive events and contribute to them through the tri-city organization at Park City.

Question 8: Invitations to the candidate forum. I have mailed these invitations, as secretary, at least once in the past and would have done so again,

but I did not have the information and Carolyn did, so what is the problem? Yes, it was on Senior Club letterhead, since we were sponsoring the event and have done so at every city election since 1987.

Question 9: Harold Smith as campaign treasurer. Since most, if not all of the campaign funds came from the Smith bank account, why should not Harold be treasurer.

Question 10: Postage on correspondence. The City of Bel Aire received in 2012 from Sedgwick County \$18,000 for senior services. Yes, Carolyn bought a roll of stamps. This is the first time since she has been our chairman that she has done so. In the past, she has bought stamps from her own pocket. She mails next month’s schedule to every member who did not attend the previous month’s pot luck dinner.

Question 11: 25th anniversary celebration. We were told that our club budget for 2012 was \$4,000, which ultimately came from Sedgwick County, not the City of Bel Aire. Yes, we spent \$1,215.13 for our anniversary dinner celebration. Frankly, after 25 years of paying taxes in Bel Aire, we think we deserved it.

When the new City Hall was being built, we were approached with blueprints, which included the Senior Center. We chose to stay with the tri-city group, because we did not want to lose our senior director or all of the aforementioned events that we enjoy at Park City. We also wished to maintain our independence, schedule our own programs, go where we want to go, and do what we want to do. Yes, we are old and set in our ways. So be it. We feel we have earned the right.

I don’t understand why Mr. O’Neal and his group wants to get rid of the Senior Club so badly that he continues to make false statements about them.

— Wanda Urquhart, Gladys Cooper, Lois Hiebert, Harold Ramsey, Joyce Tammany, Janet Spangler, Gary Spangler, Marlene Eaton, Alvin Eaton, Mary Frances Webber, Chris Slaby, Vyrn Slaby, Helen Duncan, Pauline Scheffler.

No place for ill will moving forward

There’s an undeniable schism in Bel Aire and it’s unfortunate. It’s unrealistic to expect everyone in a community to get along, but the road to prosperity isn’t paved in anger and resentment.

It’s healthy to question motives of elected officials and candidates for local government positions and we encourage residents to speak up anytime they don’t agree with the direction their city is taking. But in Bel Aire, things seem too personal and we think it’s time for everybody to move on.

We know Bel Aire is working to recover from nearly \$20 million in debt. We know the bulk of that debt was accrued with the purchase of large tracts of land that haven’t been developed.

When the land was purchased about a decade ago, the plan was to spur a lot of growth in Bel Aire without being encroached by the City of Wichita. The land was bought at a time when all signs pointed upward.

In 2008, we saw a devastating economic downfall that brought much of the desired development to a screeching halt. Understandably, the governing body that approved the land grab has been questioned, but there is absolutely nothing to be gained from pointing fingers.

It’s no secret there are current and past elected officials, city employees and residents at-large who don’t like each other in Bel Aire. Some of it has to do with opposing views on the city’s role in taking ownership of all the land.

Another sensitive subject is the presence of two senior citizen organizations in the city. There has been questioning about the justification for two senior groups and we think that’s a healthy discussion to have as long as it’s civil.

We don’t think it’s fair to place all of the blame for the city’s financial troubles on one group nor do we think it’s just in giving all the credit to the recently departed group in charge for Bel Aire’s recent momentum.

There’s a saying that time heals all wounds. Everyone living in Bel Aire who cares about the wellbeing of their city and wants to see it grow and prosper should check their egos at the door and be willing to work together to make sure the city’s best days lie ahead.

— The Bel Aire Breeze

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City of

Bel Aire

City of

Bel Aire



Bel Aire Recreation

5251 E. 48th North • www.belaireks.gov • 744-2700
Mon., Tue., & Thur. 8-8 • Wed. & Fri. 8-7 • Sat. 9-3
For more information on these or any Bel Aire Recreation Programs call 744-2700.

HELP WANTED

The City of Bel Aire has part-time/summer openings available for youth baseball/softball umpires, lifeguards, and an assistant pool manager. Apply in person at the Bel Aire Recreation Center.

MAXIMIZE BASKETBALL INSTRUCTION
Bel Aire Recreation has partnered with Brent Atwater, a former collegiate player and coach in offering group and individual basketball instruction. Call 807-1036 or 744-8841 for more information.

FISHING CLINIC

Bel Aire Recreation has partnered with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks to bring you a free fishing clinic on Friday, June 21st from 10:00 – 11:30am. Space is limited, therefore pre-registration is required.

SUMMER DAY CAMP

The Wichita YMCA will again offer a state-licensed day camp this summer at the Bel Aire Recreation Center. Elementary age activities include arts & crafts, games, sports, swimming, field trips, and much more. For more information or to register call the YMCA at 264-1610.

A \$5 late fee will be charged to all sign-ups after the deadline.
For more information on these or any Bel Aire Recreation Programs call 744-2700

RECREATIONAL SUMMER BALL LEAGUES

(boys ages 5-11 & girls ages 5-12)
Teams will play up to two games per week on Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday evening, or Saturdays beginning June 3. Leagues include T-Ball, Machine Pitch and Youth Pitch Baseball & Softball. The deadline has passed but limited openings remain.

TAEKWONDO (ages 5 & up)

Classes meet on Monday & Friday from 5:00-6:00 pm or Tuesday & Thursday from 7:00-8:00 pm. These are great classes for beginners to black belts.

YOGA

Classes are held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6:10-7:10 pm. Participants need to provide their own yoga mat. Adults can join at any time! Teens & adults can join at any time!

FITNESS CENTER (ages 16 & up)

The Fitness Center consists of elliptical cross trainers, treadmills, recumbent bike, multi-station weight machine, and free-weights. There is no charge for pass holders, or it is available with the purchase of a daily pass.

Bel Aire Seniors

All SENIORS 55+ are cordially invited to all events listed below. The Senior Center and Library area is open from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. Monday through Friday excluding holidays. The library has a wide selection of library books to check out at no cost nor time restraints, along with computers available for study or research. Remember any senior can belong to or attend more than one senior center/club in Sedgwick County.

Locations:

Senior Center/Community Room – 7651 E. Central Park Ave., 744-2451
Recreation Center – 5251 E. 48th St. N., 744-2700

Weekly Events:

Bel Aire Walkers – M-F, 8-9 a.m. at the Rec Center (indoors & climate controlled)
Free for BA Senior members, alternate times available
Men's Coffee & Fellowship – Mondays, 10 a.m. at the Senior Center
Yoga – Mondays & Wednesdays, 6 p.m. at the Rec Center (monthly fee)
Bridge Games – Tuesdays, 1 p.m. at the Senior Center
Low Impact Aerobics – Wednesdays, 9 a.m. at the Rec Center
Braum's Breakfast – Fridays, 9:00 a.m. on North Rock Road

Monthly & Special Events:

May 1, 10 a.m. – Volunteer library work time at the Senior Center
May 6, 6:30 p.m. – Potluck & Mariachi Jalisco Band – Community Room
May 7, 8:30 a.m. – Breakfast at the Breadbasket in Newton
May 9, 11 a.m. – 40/70 Rule - Michael Steinberg, Home Instead Senior Care
May 13, 9:30 a.m. – RS Advisory Meeting
May 13, 11:30 a.m. – Lunch at Applebee's in Park City
May 14, 9 a.m. – CS Advisory Meeting at the Rec Center
May 15, 10 a.m. – Men's Coffee at Braum's on North Rock Road
May 15, 10:15 a.m. – Senior Aerobics Brunch (different locations)
May 15, 2 p.m. – Ladies Tea/Coffee at Braum's on North Rock Road
May 17, 11:30 – Wichita Ribfest – Intrust Bank Arena, Carpool from Senior Center
May 20, 6 p.m. – Covered Dish Dinner with Attorney Linda Kirby – Rec Center
May 21, 6 p.m. – Ladies Dine Out - for info call Anita at 744-2840
May 22, 10 a.m. – Open Sewing at the Senior Center
May 22, 7 p.m. – Bunko games at the Senior Center

Central Park Pool 7350 E. Central Park Ave. • 744-7331

SUMMER PASSES

Individual (ages 12 & older): \$100/year
Family (2 adults and dependent children residing in the home): \$150/year

DAILY FEES

Under age 12 (must be accompanied by an adult): \$2 per day
Over age 12: \$3 per day

POOL HOURS

Weekdays

Swim Lessons 11 AM - 1 PM
Open Swim: 1 PM - 7 PM
Swimming Lessons: 7 PM - 8 PM

Weekends

Saturday & Sunday:
Pool Hours — 1 PM - 6 PM

POOL HOURS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

POOL RENTALS

Have your next party at the pool!
Rental packages are available after normal business hours.
Rentals are subject to availability.
Up to 25 patrons — \$40/hour
Over 25* patrons — \$60/hour
*limit of 50 patrons

GROUP SWIMMING LESSONS

Members — \$35/session
Non-members — \$44/session

Morning Sessions

Sessions dates: 6/17-6/28; 7/8-7/19;
and 7/22-8/1
Times: 11-11:45 AM & 12-12:45 PM

Evening Sessions

Sessions dates: 6/17-6/28; 7/8-7/19;
and 7/22-8/1
Times: 7-7:45 PM

Private Lessons

Private swimming lessons are available by appointment and are subject to availability

Registration for lessons, rentals, and memberships begin May 25 at the pool.

Have you seen the Action Line?

Log on to <http://www.egovlink.com/belaire/action.asp> to submit comments and concerns, ask questions or report a problem directly to City staff. We want to hear from you!

Shred and Electronics Recycling Day

The Bel Aire Lions Club is partnering with Waste Connections and Electronix Recyclers, Inc. to offer a shred and electronics recycling event at City Hall on May 4th from 9am till noon. This year, in addition to paper shredding, there will also be on-site electronics recycling available.

The following items will be accepted for recycling at no charge:

Microwave Ovens, VCR, DVD Players, Cameras and Camcorders, Electronic Gaming Consoles, Stereos, Radios and CD Players, household appliances.

Computer Technology: Monitors, Hard Drives, Keyboards, Mice, Modems, Routers, Switches, Desktop, Laptop Computers, Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS), Batteries, Servers, Mainframe, and Computers.

Office Equipment: Projectors, Shredders, Typewriters, Copiers, Printers, Scanners, Duplicators.

Telecommunications: Pagers, Handsets, Fax Machines, Answering Machines, Cell Phones, PDA, Multi-Line Telephone Systems.

(For data destruction they will bring a 12 ton press to crush the hard drives and anything with data)

*There will be a charge for Cathode Ray Tube Televisions at \$1.00 for each diagonal inch.

Sign up today for e-billing!

Hate having to pay for a stamp or worry about a piece of mail being lost? Then sign up to have your Bel Aire Utility Bill e-mailed to you. It will not only reduce the clutter of paper on your kitchen counter, but will also save a tree or two in the process. Go Green Today! Contact the Utility Department at 744-2451 ext. 132 or utilclerk@belaireks.gov to sign up today!

Community Events

TOPS – Tuesdays, 9 a.m. at the Senior Center
City Council Meetings – 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of every month
April 4 – Shred & Electronics Recycling
April 11, 11 a.m. – Red Hat's meeting, for info call Anita at 744-2840
April 13, 7 p.m. – Central Park HOA at the Senior Center
April 20, 6 p.m. – Bel Aire Heights HOA at the Community Room
April 21, 4 p.m. – Utility Advisory Committee Meeting

Chamber Member of the Month



City Hall

Ty Lasher, City Manager 744-2451, ext. 217
Recreation Department 744-2700
Central Park Pool 744-7331
Parks Department 744-8609
Police • Emergency 911
Non-emergency 744-6000
Animal Control (Sedgwick County) 660-7070
Public Works 744-2888
Water/Sewer Emergency (after 5 p.m.) 761-6972 or 761-6973
Utility Billing 744-2451, ext. 132
(Waste Connections) 838-4920
Hazardous Waste (Sedgwick County) 660-7464

Deadline for June *Bel Aire Breeze*
Friday, May 17

Loan helps Bel Aire address infrastructure

By Matt Heilman

There has been increased buzz around the City of Bel Aire in the last several months relating to development options that once implemented, will forever change the landscape of the city and surrounding area. While the city looks forward to opportunities to attract millions of new visitors with development of a sports complex, a resort water park, an aquarium and retail space, Bel Aire has several key projects to address its deteriorating infrastructure that are needed before the city can achieve the type of growth

it's hoping for. One key project the city is looking to tackle carries a steep price tag, but is accompanied by a 20-year finance plan courtesy of a revolving loan available through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. "Currently, the City of Bel Aire is in the process of making improvements to high priority areas of the deteriorating wastewater collection system," the KDHE said. Bel Aire has identified several concerns it's addressed in improving its wastewater collection system, including 12 manholes that need rehabilita-

tion, 1,500 feet of cracked and undersized sewer line and a main lift station suffering from a heavy concentration of hydrogen sulfide gas. The project to repair and replace main sewage lines in Bel Aire would cost \$535,980, the KDHE said. The KDHE said Bel Aire is currently served by a central gravity sewer collection system that transports all the wastewater to a treatment facility operated by the Chisholm Creek Utility Authority. The system has several lift stations. The Chisholm Creek Utility Authority, or CCUA is the

water and sewer treatment facility co-owned by Bel Aire and Park City that was built as the primary water supplier for both cities. Bel Aire City Manager Ty Lasher said the work with KDHE grant money would involve the installation of one sewage line and repair to another near 45th North and Rock Road. The city applied for the loan to fund the project in October. To help fund the loan payments, the city approved an increase to its utility rates last month. Lasher said the increase would include a sewer rate

increase of about \$2.75 per month. It accompanies a \$6.10 monthly increase in water rates. The increase was in line with the recommendation from Springstead, Inc., following its utility rate study of Bel Aire. The sewer rate increase was also deemed necessary to help Bel Aire pay for its part of a state-required improvement on the headworks of the CCUA sewer plant, where the sewage from Park City and Bel Aire enters the plant. The headworks project carries a cost of nearly \$1.9 million, split between Bel Aire and Park City. Lasher said the city hoped

to see the wastewater collection system improvements project start this summer. He said area homeowners near 45th North and Rock Road that could be inconvenienced with the construction, would be notified before the work begins. While city leaders would have liked to have avoid a utility rate increase, Lasher said the city could be faced with much more expensive problems if its infrastructure needs aren't addressed as soon as possible. "Cities in general are trying to keep rates low, but it has come at a cost of not upkeeping systems," Lasher said.

Crime

Continued from Page 1

grill of the van. The resident who gave the suspect description was unable to read the tag on the back of the van.

Kechi Police Chief John Blevins said the witness described the suspect as well dressed, like a realtor. He said the van had side windows and was not a "box-type van." He said the van was parked when the witness, a

neighbor, came home. "Keep your eyes open for any suspicious activity and/or vehicles," Blevins said. Kechi police said some of the homes hit by thieves in Kechi and Bel Aire are on the market and photos of them are displayed online, both

of the exterior and interior. Police say it's possible these homes could have been targeted from an Internet search. In response to recent burglaries, the City of Kechi is working to implement a Neighborhood Watch Program. Police say they're still

trying to establish watch captains for different neighborhoods in town and are encouraged because residents seem to be more aware of their surroundings during the day when most of the break-ins have been reported. In late February, Daily said

area break-ins could likely be attributed to a couple organized groups. Bel Aire police are continuing to work with the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office and neighboring police departments in hopes of slowing the frequency of break-ins and thefts.

Leaders

Continued from Page 1

its debt that approached \$20 million owed on city-owned, undeveloped land. "I could see the city was about to go bankrupt and default on their debt," Smith said. "With my background, I figured I was in the best position as far as the mayoral position goes, to handle that." Unfortunately, Bel Aire's efforts to avoid bankruptcy resulted in a combination of increased taxes and budget cuts that, two years ago, included a hit to personnel in the city's police department. Much of Bel Aire's land remains undeveloped, but the outlook has taken a turn for the better with an improved local economy restoring confidence in developers and

builders. Smith said he hopes to see the new city council and mayor build off of recent momentum and sustain improved relationships with neighboring communities. "I hope they understand what the problem is and will keep that as their No. 1 focus," he said of the debt still facing the city. "It's critical that we do that and we work to keep solid relationships." Overall, Smith said he was proud of the previous council for avoiding a default on its debt and voiced confidence in the newly elected leaders. In the April 2 city council and mayoral election in Bel Aire, incumbent Peggy O'Donnell and challengers Guy MacDonald, Ramona Becker and Betty Martine won four at-large seats on the council.



Matt Heilman

Departing council member Gary Breault (left) wishes Ty Lasher and the new council well as he's recognized for his eight years of service April 16.

Council member Ken Lee, who has served the governing body for about eight months,

said the newly elected council members joining him and O'Donnell, "bring a good

mix" of career experience, views and backgrounds that should benefit the city. In her third term that began last month, O'Donnell said she wanted to see through the new residential and commercial construction in the city and see progress continue on commitments for more development. Gary Breault, on the council since 2005, decided not to file for re-election. Like Smith, he indicated the city is doing well enough for a leadership change to be seamless. "I feel good about leaving the city council while the economic development potential appears to be so good right now," he said. "The new housing and commercial opportunities that are presented to the city right now are very exciting for the short- and long-term success

of Bel Aire." The departing council member reviewed some of the accomplishments the council made while he served, including the hiring of City Manager Ty Lasher and Police Chief John Daily. Breault, a veterinarian and the owner of Heartland Animal Hospital in Bel Aire, said his last eight years on the city council enlightened him to the struggles of city government. He said he's optimistic for Bel Aire's future and what the staff and new city leaders will be able to accomplish. "As I go back to private citizenship in Bel Aire, I know I will have a deeper appreciation for those who give their time serving on committees, boards, city government and city staff positions," he said.

Housing

Continued from Page 1

Stan Longhoffer to provide the city with information including current residential housing stock, estimated new housing demands and desires

of current and future homebuyers. The marketing proposal was approved at a cost not to exceed \$8,000 out of the city's economic development fund. Also on April 2, the council: •Approved an appropriations ordinance of \$537,159.62

•Approved an ordinance to establish a STAR bond district to finance the needed infrastructure for the city's proposed downtown and entertainment district with state sales tax revenue. •Held a 30-minute executive session to discuss matters relating to discuss matters relating to attorney-client privilege, acquisition of property and confidential data relating to a private business. No bind-

ing action was taken in the closed meeting, but in open session, the council approved a letter of intent with a site selector for the purchase of about 22 acres in the Sunflower Commerce Park. The council also approved allowing John T. Arnold, a commercial real estate professional assisting Bel Aire, to negotiate the price for the land. Lasher said the sale of the 22 acres is proposed to close by May 17.

Election

Continued from Page 1

member Keith Thomas said the low turnout was "unfortunate." Council member Tom Jones said part of the reason for low voter turnouts was that several candidates countywide ran unopposed. In Park City, the city's new mayor Ray Mann, and returning council members John Lehnher and Gary Aldrich didn't face opposition on the ballot. However, in Ward 4, only 56 voters cast their ballots to determine Thomas' replacement. Melvin Kerr won the Ward 4 election with a 34 to 22 advantage against Dennis Patterson. Park City has a population of about 500 more people than Bel Aire. In Valley Center, there were two contested council races in the city's four-ward

system. Only 273 votes were recorded to determine Valley Center's new council. Valley Center and Bel Aire have almost identical populations. As of July 2011, Valley Center's population was recorded at 6,861 residents. Bel Aire's population was recorded at 6,806. City leaders have indicated the primary reason Bel Aire had a better turnout was that there was more of a turnover with departing council members as voters had the eight candidates to choose from to determine four at-large seats. Consequently, there was more buzz generated in the City of Bel Aire leading up to the April 2 elections. In the City of Kechi, city leaders estimate about 150 votes

were cast to determine two at-large council seats and the city's new mayor. Incumbent Deb Jacobs retained her seat on the council with 107 votes. Virginia Riemann retained her seat as a write-in candidate. Eighty votes were cast for a write-in candidate, compared to 42 for challenger Rick Eberhard. Kechi's new mayor, Ed Parker, who ran unopposed, won with 92 votes compared to 21 preferences for a write-in candidate. On school boards, two at-large seats on the Valley Center school board and three spots on the Wichita School Board were decided April 2. In Valley Center, 1,264 votes were cast in the district that includes 8,885 registered voters.

The Wichita school district, which includes seven board members representing six districts and an at-large seat, has 169,435 registered voters. On April 2, 25,101 ballots were cast, combining the votes in Districts 1, 2 and 5.

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April 3 — Officer Swanson responded to a suspicious character call in the 4700 block of North Oliver. A silver van with no apparent license plate was in the driveway of the residence.

0 1

March 28 — Officer Steele responded to a suspicious character

March 23 — Officer Mavia stopped a vehicle for a defective light in the 4200 block of North

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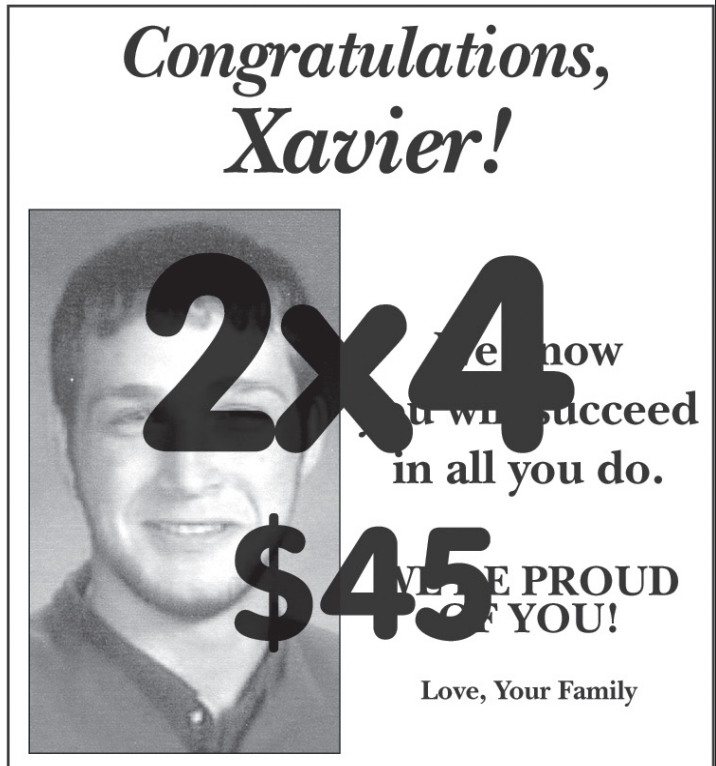
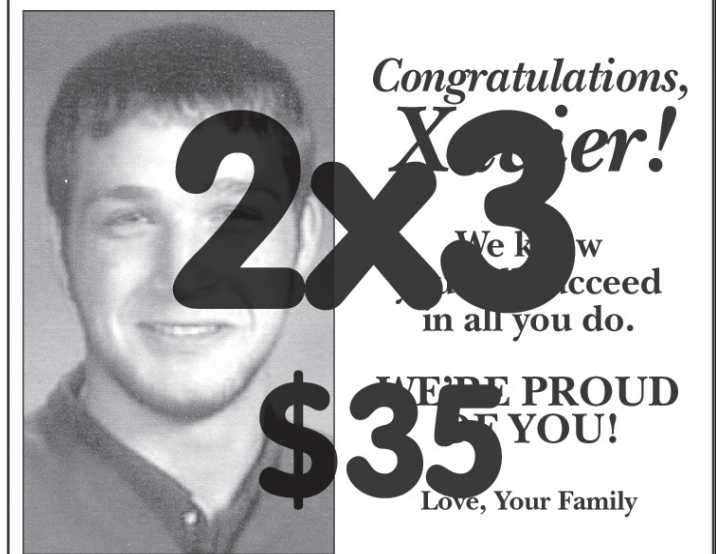
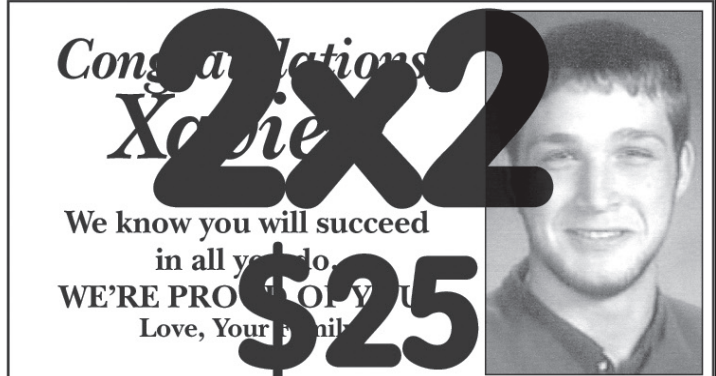
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Arrest made in death of Kechi pediatrician

By Matt Heilman

An arrest has been made in connection to the April 2012 death of a Kechi doctor. On April 16, 24-year-old Cody Allen Fields made his first court appearance in the Sedgwick County District Courtroom of Judge Warren Wilbert. Allen is charged with leaving the scene of an accident resulting in death. He was released on \$5,000 bond

and is scheduled to make his next court appearance April 30. Allen’s arrest comes about one year after Dr. W. Howard Whiteside, a longtime Wichita pediatrician and Kechi resident, was killed while jogging after the sun went down late April 19 or early April 20 between Oliver and Hillside along 61st North. Whiteside, 65, died from his injuries after a vehicle, allegedly driven by Allen, hit him.

DEATH

DAVID SANGSTER
David W. Sangster, 62, self-employed Locksmith, died April 19, 2013. He is survived by his wife, Beverly of Bel Aire; step-father, Lyle Bird of Kechi; daughter, Sherree Sangster of Bel Aire; and sister, Twilla

Scheidenan of Wichita. Visitation was April 22; funeral service was April 23, both at Hillside Funeral Home East. Memorials may be made to Harry Hynes Memorial Hospice, 313 S. Market, Wichita, Kansas 67202.

CHURCH HIGHLIGHTS

Christ Lutheran Church
There are three different types of services every Sunday. At 8:30 a.m., there is a Contemporary Service; at 9:45 a.m., a Kid Friendly Service as well as Sunday School for all ages; and at 11:00 a.m., a Traditional Lutheran Service. Communion is offered at every service every Sunday. A variety of weekly and monthly activities are offered including Falcon Fellowship (Free lunch for students at Heights High School on the 2nd Wednesday of the month), Youth groups, Quilting, Choirs, and Men’s Breakfast. Find the church online at www.christ-lutheran.org; e-mail office@clc.kscoxmail.com. Pastor Chad’s email is pastor@clc.kscoxmail.com. Call the office at 744-1242. The church is located at 5356 N. Hillside (at 53rd and N. Hillside, across from Wichita Heights HS)

Church of the Resurrection
Church of the Resurrection (Roman Catholic) is located at 4910 N. Woodlawn in Bel Aire. Masses for the Lord’s Day are 5:30 p.m. Saturday and 8:30 and 11 a.m. Sunday. Weekday Masses are 8 a.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; also at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday. Resurrection Catholic School has students from preschool through eighth grade. The parish/school website is www.resurrectionwichita.com. Phone number is 744-

2776. Rev. James F. Weldon is the pastor.
Community Bible Chapel
The church is located at 4551 Auburn, south of 45th North between Oliver and Woodlawn, in Bel Aire. Worship service and breaking of the bread are at 9 a.m., with Bible study and Sunday school at 10:30 on Sundays. Wednesday prayer and Bible study are at 7 p.m. For more information, call Melvan Adair at 744-7091.

Fairmount United Church of Christ
The church welcomes a new minister, Rev. Larry Young. Visit the newly renovated building at 1605 Fairmount in Wichita (one block south and one block east of Hillside and 17th North). Sunday worship is at 10:30 a.m. which includes children’s church. Sunday school begins at 9:30. For more information, call 682-1597 or visit at www.fairmountucc.org.
Gospel Assembly Church
Located at 4230 N. Oliver in Bel Aire, service times are 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday. Bible study is 7 p.m. Monday. Prayer service is 7 p.m. Tuesday. Praise and worship is 7 p.m. Wednesday. Phone number is 744-1502. Rev. Gary D. Green is the pastor.

Greenwich United Methodist Church
Sunday worship service at 9 a.m. Fellowship and coffee follow the service. Pastor Jeff Miller can be reached at 744-0203. Senior Day first Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. United Methodist Women meet the first Thursday of each month at 1 p.m. Movie night is the second Saturday of each month at 6:30 p.m. A snack is served. The church is located about a mile south of K-254 on Greenwich Road. The phone number is 744-0203.

Kechi United Methodist Church
Kechi United Methodist Church is located at 4533 E. 61st North. The phone number is 744-1221. Rev. Guy E. Rendoff is the pastor. Website is www.kechiumc.org. E-mail is kechiumc@sbcglobal.net Worship services on Sunday morning are at 9:03 and 11 a.m. with Sunday school at 10 a.m. During both worship services, children’s church and a nursery are offered. The A.I.M. Class (Adults

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Students of the month

Stucky Middle School students Mike Canup (left) and Michael Smith accept their recognition as the Bel Aire Lions Club Students of the Month for the month of March. Teachers at Stucky select students each month for the Lions Club to honor. The students receive a certificate of recognition and a T-shirt embroidered with the Lions Club logo. The Lions club invites the students and their families to a meeting and provides them lunch.

in Ministry) will begin a new Advent Bible study on Dec. 2. The class meets in the parlor at 10 a.m. Newcomers are always welcome.
Pine Valley Christian Church
The church is located at 5620 E. 21st North. Sunday school is at 9 a.m. with worship at 10:15. For more information call 685-2421.

Randall Road Baptist Church
Randall Road Baptist is located at 6556 N Randall, Park City. Sunday school starts at 10 a.m. Worship is at 11 a.m. Sunday evening activities start at 6 p.m. Wednesday Bible study begins at 7 p.m. Contact Pastor Jim McQuery at 201-1696 or e-mail at jmcquery@cox.net.

Risen Savior Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod
Contemporary Sunday

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1st service interpreted for the deaf in ASL at 8:45
Sunday school interpreted for the deaf at 10
Please come and join us!

worship services at 8 and 10:30 a.m. Communion on the first and third Sunday. Adult Sunday school and Bible class meet at 9:15 a.m. Children’s church at 10:30. A nursery is provided during Bible class and second service. Wednesday evening ministries are 6:30-8 p.m. Preschool is now open. Enrollment continues for Monday/Wednesday/Friday preschool class currently in session for 3- to 5-year-olds from 9-11:45 a.m. Call the church office for details. The church is located at 6770 E. 34th North in Wichita. The phone number is 683-5538. www.risensavior.net. Senior pastor is Tom Harmon.

University United Methodist Church
The church is located across from the Wichita State University campus at 21st and Yale. Sunday activities include adult and youth educational classes at 9:15 a.m., traditional service at 10:30 and youth group activities from 4 to 6 p.m. E-mail uume2220@uumc.net; phone 686-6765. Rev. Charles Claycomb is the pastor.

Send your church’s upcoming events and service times to legals@arkvalleynews.com or call 755-0821.



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